

## 2018 Current Fiscal Year Report: Creating Options for Veterans Expedited Recovery (COVER) Commission

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### 1. Department or Agency

Department of Veterans Affairs

### 2. Fiscal Year

2018

### 3. Committee or Subcommittee

Creating Options for Veterans Expedited Recovery (COVER) Commission

### 3b. GSA

### Committee No.

2616

### 4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?

No

### 5. Current Charter

07/24/2017

### 6. Expected Renewal Date

07/24/2019

### 7. Expected Term Date

12/31/2019

### 8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

No

### 8b. Specific Termination Authority

### 8c. Actual Term Date

### 9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Continue

### 10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

No

### 10b. Legislation Pending?

Not Applicable

### 11. Establishment Authority Statutory (Congress Created)

### 12. Specific Establishment Authority

Section 931 of CARA

### 13. Effective Date

07/22/2016

### 14. Committee Type

Ad hoc

### 14c. Presidential?

Yes

### 15. Description of Committee Other Committee

### 16a. Total Number of Reports

No Reports for this Fiscal Year

### 17a. Open 0 17b. Closed 0 17c. Partially Closed 2 Other Activities 0 17d. Total 2 Meetings and Dates

Purpose	Start	End
Agenda for inaugural meeting of COVER Commission includes review and discussion of objectives described in Section 931 of CARA 2016; review of current state within VA; review of potential approaches to achieve objectives to include research and survey methodologies; delineation of objectives into distinct workgroups; assignment of Commissioners and support staff to those workgroups; establish workgroups meeting and reporting cadence.	07/24/2018	07/25/2018
Commissioners heard from a variety of Program Office executives and Subject Matter experts who provided the Commissioners with information pertinent to the goals and duties of the COVER Commission as outlined in the CARA 2016, Section 931 legislation.	08/21/2018	08/22/2018

### Number of Committee Meetings Listed: 2

	Current FY	Next FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$537,600.00	\$443,628.00

<b>18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$13,500.00	\$54,000.00
<b>18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members</b>	\$7,500.00	\$27,000.00
<b>18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff</b>	\$19,500.00	\$67,500.00
<b>18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)</b>	\$0.00	\$15,000.00
<b>18d. Total</b>	\$578,100.00	\$607,128.00
<b>19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)</b>	3.38	3.75

**20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?**

The COVER Commission supports Secretary VA's priorities of Greater Choice and Suicide Prevention through an examination of complimentary and integrative health treatments that have the potential to improve the health of Veterans.

**20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?**

Through Congressional and Presidential appointments as required in COVER legislation.

**20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?**

Estimated number of face-to-face meetings per year - 6 with additional meetings called at the discretion of the Chair and/or DFO. Relevance of meetings called will be high.

**20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?**

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) of 2016 requires the establishment of the COVER Commission to achieve the goals outlined in Section 931 of that legislation. (Goals are listed in narrative description under Performance Measure section.)

**20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?**

Not Applicable

**21. Remarks**

Termination: Specific date not provided for member termination date as commission selection has yet to reach a majority. Per COVER legislation: (4) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—Members of the Commission shall be appointed for the life of the Commission; and (f) TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.—The Commission shall terminate 30 days after the Commission submits the final report under subsection (e)(2).

## Designated Federal Officer

Sheila B. Hickman DFO

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Amidon, Matthew	04/06/2018	09/30/2019	Director for Military Service Initiative, George Bush Institute	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Beeman, Thomas	07/09/2018	12/31/2019	Rear Admiral, USN, (ret)	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Harvey, Thomas	07/19/2018	12/31/2019	US Army retired	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Jonas, Wayne	11/15/2016	11/15/2018	Lt. Colonel Army (Retired) Physician	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Khan, Jamil	02/13/2017	03/13/2019	Lt Colonel U.S. Marine Corp (Retired)	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Leinenkugel, Thomas	07/09/2018	12/31/2019	Senior Advisor to White House; Company Commander, Marines (ret)	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Maguen, Shira	02/20/2018	10/31/2019	Staff Psychologist, SF VAMC	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Potoczniack, Michael	02/20/2018	10/31/2019	Staff Psychologist, Northern CA VAMC	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Rose, John	02/13/2017	02/13/2019	Navy Captain (Retired)	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Soltz, Jon	11/15/2016	11/15/2018	Lt Colonel Army Reserves	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

**Number of Committee Members Listed: 10**

## Narrative Description

Although there are no performance measures delineated for COVER Commission, goals described in Section 931 of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 include: 1) Examine the efficacy of the evidence-based therapy model used by VA to treat mental health illnesses and identify areas of improvement; 2) Conduct a patient-centered survey within each VISN to examine: the experiences of veterans with VA facilities regarding mental health care, the experiences of veterans with non-VA facilities regarding mental health care, the preferences of veterans regarding available treatment for mental health issues and which methods the veterans believe to be most effective, the experience, if any, of veterans with respect to the complementary and integrative health treatment therapies, the prevalence of prescribing medication to veterans seeking treatment for mental health disorders through VA, and the outreach efforts of VA regarding the availability of benefits and treatments for veterans for addressing mental health issues; 3) examine available research on complementary and integrative health for mental health disorders in areas of therapy including: music therapy, equine therapy, training and caring for service dogs, yoga therapy, acupuncture therapy, meditation therapy, outdoor sports therapy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, accelerated resolution therapy, art therapy, magnetic resonance therapy, and others; 4) study the sufficiency of

VA resources to deliver quality mental health care; and 5) study the current treatments and resources available within VA and assess: the effectiveness of such treatments and resources in decreasing the number of suicides per day by veterans, the number of veterans who have been diagnosed with mental health issues, the percentage of veterans who have completed VA counseling sessions, and the efforts of VA to expand complementary and integrative health treatments viable to the recovery of veterans with mental health issues as determined by the Secretary to improve the effectiveness of treatments offered by VA.

**What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?**

Checked if Applies

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Improvements to health or safety                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Trust in government                               | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Major policy changes                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Advance in scientific research                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Effective grant making                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Improved service delivery                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Increased customer satisfaction                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Other   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Outcome Comments**

Provide report of findings and recommendations to SECVA, HVAC, SVAC, and POTUS

**What are the cost savings associated with this committee?**

Checked if Applies

- |                            |                                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| None                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Unable to Determine        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Under \$100,000            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| \$100,000 - \$500,000      | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| \$500,001 - \$1,000,000    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| \$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| \$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Over \$10,000,000          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Cost Savings Other         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**Cost Savings Comments**

Not Applicable

**What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?**

0

**Number of Recommendations Comments**

Not Applicable

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?**

0%

**% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments**

Not Applicable

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?**

0%

**% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments**

Not Applicable

**Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?**

Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable ☐

**Agency Feedback Comments**

Not Applicable

**What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?**

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Action Comments**

Not Applicable

**Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?**

No

**Grant Review Comments**

Not Applicable

**How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?**

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO

☐

Online Agency Web Site

☐

Online Committee Web Site

☐

Online GSA FACA Web Site

☐

Publications

☐

Other

☐

**Access Comments**

Not Applicable